

DECISION NOTICE
Elk Island Fishing Access Site Proposed Development Project

Prepared by Region 7, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
P.O. Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301

September 28, 2010

PROPOSAL

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposed to develop improvements at the Elk Island Fishing Access Site. Specific improvements under the proposed action include:

1. Single-wide gravel boat ramp.
2. Gravel parking area to accommodate up to eight vehicles.
3. Grade/gravel the access road.
4. Turn-around area for vehicles launching and loading boats.
5. Concrete aggregate latrine.
6. Regulation signs, fencing and barriers to prohibit off-road vehicle use to be installed as needed.

FWP proposed two alternatives to the proposed action:

Alternative A-No Action: Access to this stretch of the Yellowstone River would continue to be difficult and routinely unavailable. Only those with boats small enough to be hand-launched and bank or shore anglers would be able to use the area. Also, no other amenities such as access road improvements would be available making the site difficult to access when the road is wet from rain or snowmelt.

Alternative B-Site Development: This alternative would apply the above described improvements to the site encouraging recreational use of this stretch of the lower Yellowstone River by boaters and shore anglers.

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) PROCESS

The proposed development project was the subject of the “Draft Environmental Assessment: Elk Island Fishing Access Site Proposed Development Project”, which described the project and analyzed its potential effects on the human and natural environment. The environmental assessment, conducted pursuant to the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), was released to the public on August 19, 2010 and open to comment through September 20, 2010. The EA was advertised through legal

notices in the *GLENDIVE RANGER REVIEW*, *SIDNEY HERALD* and *BILLINGS GAZETTE*. The EA was also posted on the FWP webpage. The environmental assessment found that no significant adverse impacts would result from the proposed development project.

SUMMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

One individual provided one comment during the 30-day review period. This comment stated that “the Billings Rod and Gun Club along with the Public Land and Water Access Association are in full support of the proposed addition and improvements to the Elk Island Fishing Access Site.”

DECISION

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and FWP evaluation, it is my decision to proceed with the proposed action alternative B, as described in the Elk Island Fishing Access Site Proposed Development Project Draft Environmental Assessment. In this the preferred alternative, FWP proposes the following actions:

1. Install a single wide gravel boat ramp.
2. Construct a gravel parking area to accommodate up to eight vehicles.
3. Grade and gravel the access road.
4. Develop a turn-around area for vehicles launching or loading boats.
5. Install a concrete aggregate latrine.
6. Erect regulation signs, fencing and barriers to prohibit off road vehicle use.



John Little
Region 7 Parks Manager
Miles City, Montana
September 28, 2010